

BLESSINGS AND CURSES

Luke 6:17-26

I. WHAT DID HE SAY?

- A. *“Blessed are you poor...you that hunger now ... you that weep now ... you when men hate you ... But woe to you that are rich ... that are full now ... that laugh now ... when all men speak well of you ...”*
- B. You’ve Got to Be Kidding!
 - 1. Wouldn’t it be great if we didn’t have any money? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we were poor?
 - 2. Wouldn’t it be great if we didn’t have any food? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we went to bed hungry?
- C. What “Blessed” Means.
 - 1. It means “fortunate,” “happy,” “to be envied.”
 - 2. Blessed are the poor. Fortunate are the hungry. To be envied are those who weep. Happy are you when you are hated and reviled.

II. IT’S DESCRIPTIVE RATHER THAN PRESCRIPTIVE

- A. What Jesus Did Not Say:
 - 1. Blessed is poverty and hunger. Blessed is sorrow and rejection.
 - 2. Woe to riches and to laughter.
- B. What Jesus Did Say:
 - 1. Blessed are YOU poor... YOU that hunger ... YOU that weep...
 - 2. Blessed are you that hunger NOW ... that weep NOW ...
 - 3. The word we translate as “woe” can be translated “alas.” It’s an expression of grief.
- C. Who Does It Describe?
 - 1. It describes Jesus. He died penniless, hungry, weeping and hated.
 - 2. It describes us. Most of us are rich, full and well respected.

III. IT’S AN UPSIDE DOWN WORLD

- A. Everything You Learned Is Wrong.
 - 1. God only loves the well off and the powerful.
 - 2. God only blesses those who hold the chief seats in the synagogue.
- B. He Painted a New Picture.
 - 1. God also loves the poor, the lepers, beggars, women, foreigners, rotten kids, and tax collectors.
 - 2. *“Now I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you ...” (Luke 6:27)*
 - 3. Repent (turn around) and believe the Gospel (the good news)!

Prayer Concerns: Members -- Burney Biesel, Stephen Bryant, Sarah Clark, Dorys Dawson, Harry Hart, Ruth Dale Hurt, Anne Miller, Zach Mullins, Carol Webb ... Friends – Melinda Rice Ashley, Bobby Atkins, Taylor Barrineau, Lane Brasfield, Pat Bryan, Janie Canada, Arletta Crane, Jonathan Cupples, Cali Cupples, Kathy Greer, Jean Hansford, Peggy Haslop, Jim Hixon, Benette Hobday, Connie Overton, Theresa Patrick, Frank Petska, Shirley Rice, Edith Robinson, Joseph David Smith, Earl Vickery, the Stephen Ministry ...

Christian Sympathy is extended to **Maleia Lee and family** in the death of her great aunt, **Lari Clarke**.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Loving God, we admit that there are things that we think we just can't live without, and things that we believe we cannot live with. We attach ourselves to so many things and so many things seem to attach themselves to us. When will we learn that you are the vine and we are the branches? You are not just the one who sustains our lives in the midst of the things we don't want to live with, you are life itself. You are not just a breath of fresh air on a hot summer day, you are the air we breathe.

Gracious God, you told us that we can do nothing without your presence in our lives, but we try. We act as if we don't need you and try to be as self-sufficient as possible. We disguise our arrogance, delude ourselves, and begin to wither away. When we begin to die inside, we wonder why. We begin to attach ourselves to so many things that cannot ease the pain or bring us back to life.

Forgive our feeble attempts to find fulfillment in everything except your love. Teach us, Lord, the truth of life, before the hour is too late. Lead us, Lord, in the way we should go, before the gate is closed. Bring us now into your vineyard. Prune us and tend us, that we may bear good fruit. We offer you all that we are and all that we have; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

LUKE 6:17-26

And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came forth from him and healed them all.

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:

“Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

“Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh.

“Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

“But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.

“Woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

“Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.”

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

February 18 *Now I See* Luke 9:28-36

February 21 *Ash Wednesday Service*

February 25 *The Devil of a Time* Luke 4:1-13
First Sunday in Lent

On the Radio (1450 AM):

February 18 *How to Find Joy* Matthew 23:23-28

February 25 *What's Heaven Like?* Ecclesiastes 3:1-11